

MARS ONE

a board game designed by Dex

Year 2020; Mankind start the Mars colonization and the first settlement has been called Mars One (or M1 as friendly known).

A huge number of "modules" has been assembled near the orbit of the Moon and sent, using special missile-vectors, to the red planet. Here different teams assemble the new modules following the needs of the moment. In fact the time needed to make the modules arrive to Mars (each module requires 3 months for the building and more than 6 months of journey Earth-Mars) make impossible to make plans for the construction.

The Game

Mars One (in the following M1) is a game based on the same mechanism of Carcassonne¹, the game invented by Klaus-Jurgen Wrede and published by Hans im Gluck, of which can be considered as a variation both for the scenario and for some rules.

Note that M1 doesn't require Carcassonne to be played and cannot be used together with Carcassonne.

The tile set used for M1 is similar to the one of the Base version of Carcassonne and of its principal extensions; then I added some original tiles of a brand new extension.

Each extension can be easily recognized because of a different color, we have:

Carcassonne extension	Mars One extension	Color	Tiles
Base	Base	Grey	72
River	Canyon	Dark back	12
Inns & Cathedral	Communication center	White	17
Traders & Builders	Miners	Green	23
Kings & Scout	Central command	Purple	5
-	Dex	Cyan	7

Totally we have 136 tiles, that can be used in different combination following your own preferences.

Other than tiles, the game uses:

- 6 groups of fellows of different colors
- 6 pawns of different colors
- a count-points board
- 25 M1 cards
- 20 jewel cards in three flavors

The Rules

M1 has many of the same rules as Carcassonne².

The game is a "position game": in few word, each player chooses a tile, places it on the board following the constraints of the existing tiles and eventually places a fellow on it.

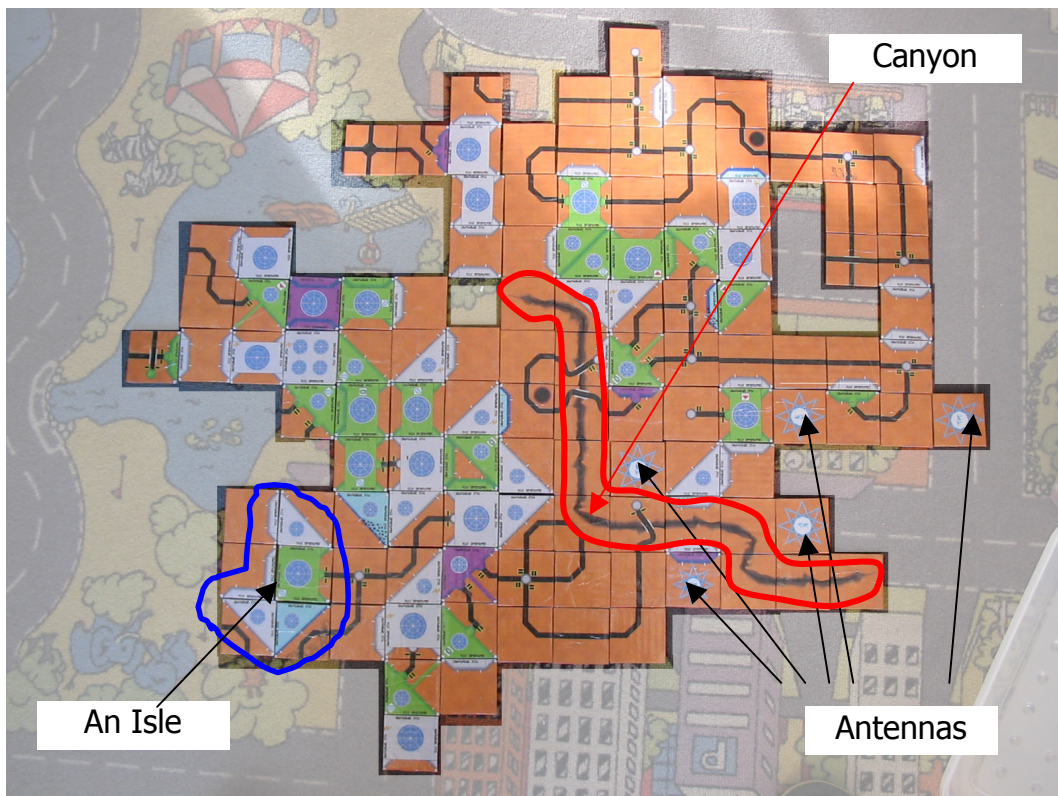
¹ Carcassonne is a mark property of Hans im Gluck, that has the copyright of the game too. Mars One is NOT related to those marks and can be seen as a NON OFFICIAL Carcassonne's variation.

² For details, have a look to the Carcassonne's original manual.

Fellows can have different names:

- on the Mars land a fellow is an Explorer
- on a module of the M1 base a fellow is a Scientist
- on a street among modules a fellow is a Transporter
- on an antenna a fellow is an Engineer

Playing M1 you'll see a growing groups of "isles", made with assembled modules, and streets connecting them. See the figure below to have an idea.



Each extension has it's own rule set, let's see them.

Base extension

This is the base tile set.

I think it could be useful highlight some points:

- the shield-rule (for counting points of the cities/isles) must be used when we have a power generator (painted as a charge);
- the monastery-rule must be used with antennas.

New rules must be considered:

- It is not possible to place an antenna near to another one.
- If a tile fills a hole (with nine tiles around) 10 additional points must be added.
- At the end of the game, calculating points for opened streets, if the street has neither beginning either end, no points must be added.

Canyon extension

This extension is a tile set that let you have a "more creative" beginning. The Canyon tiles can be easily identified because of the dark background, typical of the beginning tiles.

While placing Canyon tiles players cannot place any fellow.

With 5 players, the initial and the final Canyon tiles are not to be considered as chosen by a player (i.e. the round turn must not consider them).

Communication Center extension

This extension adds some new tiles (white), and new rules:

- if the isle with an occupied antenna³ and a power generator closes, players have to count 3 points for each tile of the isle instead of 2; each power generator counts 2 points the same.
- if the street has a fuel station (painted as pentagonal pyramid) and will close, the points of the street must be doubled.
- if an isle has two or more antennas, or a street has two or more fuel stations no additional points has to be considered.
- if the street or the isle will not close, no special rule has to be considered.

N.B. A new antenna in a an isle let a new player to enter in the isle even if it is already occupied by other players.

Miners extension

This extension adds some new tiles (green), and the use of "jewel cards" related to the images painted on some modules. Practically if a player close an isle, he can take also the cards associated to the jewels painted on the tiles of the closed isle.

NB. Note that the player closing the isle could not to have any Scientist in the same isle.

At the end of the game, for each kind of jewel (diamond, ruby, emerald) players that own the greatest number of jewel cards add 10 points.

Central Command extension

This extension adds some new tiles (purple), and the use of "M1 cards" that can be used in two alternatives ways.

Builders: for each closed isle with at least 4 tiles each owner can take a single M1 card; if the isle has at least 7 tiles, each owner can take an additional card. At the end of the game players that own the greatest number of M1 cards add 10 points.

The largest isle: at the end of the game the larger isle (closed and with at least 5 tiles) gives to owners a number of M1 card equals to the number of tiles of the isle. To keep track of players that close the larger isle, a number of M1 card equal to the number of tiles of the isle itself has to be given to the owners of the isle.

Dex extension

This extension adds some new tiles (cyan) of two different categories:

Cross: this single tile makes the possibility to have different Transporters on the same street grown and give the possibility to have very long street. In fact the street can be considered closed only when all directions of the cross are closed, in this case the number of points to add is equal to the total number of tiles of the streets starting from the cross (the cross itself count 4 points).

If the street will not close, each portion of the cross must be considered as separated and must be count only part with Transporter.

³ An antenna in a isle could be considered active even if it doesn't have eight tiles of the associated isle around, but only if the isle is closed.

Dams: these tiles reduce the possibility to set e fellows on the tiles because of a damage. In few words it is not possible to place an Explorer over a crater, a Scientist in a damaged module, or a Transporter over a ruined street.

While counting points, the damaged tiles must be considered as non-damaged tile.

How to play

M1 can be played by 2-6 players using the extension following preferences.

Each player choose a color, takes the related 8 fellows and place the pawn on the count-points board on the "zero" position.

The younger player chooses who will start to place tiles; then, in clockwise direction, each player can play his or her turn.

At the very beginning the initial tiles (one tile for the Base, or some tiles if Canyon extension is used) are placed, then the game continues normally.

For every turn, each player must proceed in this way: choose the tile, place it on the board, eventually place a fellow on it, eventually collect points (closed street and/or isles and Engineers) and add them in the count-points board.

At the end of the actions related to the last tile, the final points (opened streets/isles, Engineers, and Explorers) can be added to the count-points board.

Following you can find some suggestions:

- Base extension can be used with 2-5 players, giving 7 fellows for each player.
- If you'll use one or more extensions you can use 8 fellows for each players.
- Do not use Canyon extension with 2-3 players.
- For 6 players use at least the Communication Center extension and 8 fellows for each player.

Obviously you can use the tiles of the extension without the related rules, but ...

It could be possible to play M1 with very young children (4-7 years old), using tiles as for a Domino variation. In this case you can count points for closed streets and closed isles (in both cases one point for each tile).

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At last, but not least, "Have fun, with Mars One!".